

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 8 and AMEND claims 1, 3-7 and 9 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~protective cap for use in association with a wheel support bearing assembly that includes~~, comprising:

an outer member having an inner peripheral surface formed with raceways;

an inner member having an outer peripheral surface formed with raceways in alignment with the raceways in the outer member;

rows of rolling elements operatively interposed between the raceways in the outer member and the raceways in the inner member;

sealing units for sealing respective open ends of an annular working space delimited between the inner and outer members; ~~and~~;

a magnetic encoder provided in one of the sealing units and having an annular surface exposed bare to a radial face of the wheel support bearing assembly, the magnetic encoder having a plurality of alternating magnetic poles arranged in a direction circumferentially thereof; and said

a protective cap comprising: an annular cover-up portion for enclosing the annular surface of the magnetic encoder that is exposed bare to the radial surface of the wheel support bearing assembly, and an engagement wall integral with the annular cover-up portion and capable of being removably engaged with an inner peripheral surface of one end of an axial bore of the inner member, whereby the protective cap is removably mounted on the wheel support bearing assembly.

2. (Cancelled)